

House Resolution No. 4068

Whereas, the members of the Missouri House of Representatives feel it is altogether fitting and proper to pause from time to time to recognize individuals and organizations that have contributed to the welfare of this great state and its citizens; and

Whereas, the members now pause to recognize the one hundredth anniversary of “The Shepherd of the Hills”, written by Harold Bell Wright, published in July 1907, and the first book to sell more than one million copies in this country; and

Whereas, “The Shepherd of the Hills” has been translated into seven different languages, and produced by Hollywood four times, once with John Wayne, his first Technicolor film; and

Whereas, Wright began coming to the Ozarks in 1898, having been instructed by his physician to find a climate more suitable for his health, and he decided to venture southward from his home in Kansas, when he happened to wander upon the homestead of John and Anna Ross, known as Old Matt and Aunt Mollie in his novel, who welcomed him and allowed him to pitch a tent on their land; and

Whereas, the tent went up on Inspiration Point, thus named because of the awe-inspiring views of the rolling Ozarks hills that the ridge provides, and Wright woke every morning to these views, and describes the scenery perfectly in his novel; and

Whereas, area residents began noticing a great influx of visitors wishing to see all that Wright had told, and after a few years, feeling the strain of the Ozarks' custom of treating visitors like family, the Rosses chose to sell their homestead, which was purchased by Miss Lizzie McDaniel, of Springfield, who appreciated the story written by Wright and wished to see the homestead prosper; and

Whereas, in the 1950s, Dr. and Mrs. Bruce Trimble purchased the farm, and together with their son, Mark, decided to begin a nightly play based on the novel which resulted in what is now The Shepherd of the Hills Outdoor Theatre, with the nightly drama just down the hill from the original cabin that the Rosses lived in, and with the Trimbles' guidance, the homestead became a popular place for visitors to come and tour Old Matt's Cabin, peer into Little Pete's Cave, and at night, experience the legend of The Shepherd of the Hills; and

Whereas, in 1985, former cast member Gary Snadon and his wife, Pat, purchased the farm from the Trimbles, and Inspiration Tower was built in 1989, on the 100th anniversary of Wright's first visit to the area, and in 1996, the play was performed for the 5,000th time, making it the longest-running outdoor drama ever, and it continues to break records with every performance:

Now, therefore, be it resolved that we, the members of the Missouri House of Representatives, Ninety-fourth General Assembly, extend our congratulations to the Shepherd of the Hills on the illustrious occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of the publication of Harold Bell Wright's timeless and enduring novel based on his experiences there; and

Be it further resolved that the Chief Clerk of the Missouri House of Representatives be instructed to prepare a properly inscribed copy of this resolution for Shepherd of the Hills.

Offered by _____
Representative Dennis Wood
District No. 62

I, Rod Jetton, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Ninety-fourth General Assembly, First Regular Session, do certify that the above is a true and correct copy of House Resolution No. 4068, adopted June 18, 2007.

Rod Jetton, Speaker